



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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late hours, and improper feeding, yet such facts as we find reported by the committee for the inspection of school children's teeth, are too stubborn to allow of our overlooking them:—

SCHOOL CHILDREN'S MOUTHS EXAMINED AT TWO HIGH-CLASS SCHOOLS IN DEVON AND YORKS:—

SCHOOL.	No. Examined	Temporary Teeth requiring		Permanent Teeth requiring		Temporary Total	Permanent Total	Unsound Teeth	Teeth Extracted	Sound Dentition	
		Filling	Extracting	Filling	Extracting					No.	Ratio pr. 100
Mundell's High-class School ..	159	0	39	810	130	39	940	979	161	1 (!)	0.6
Rayner's High-class School ..	46	0	0	147	3	0	150	150	32	3	6.5

"In another high-class school, where considerable difficulties are placed in the way of attendance on the dental officer attached, only 1 had a sound denture, while 25 per cent. had *fair*, 45 per cent. *bad*, and 29 per cent. *very bad* dentures: indeed, at least 14 lads, between 14 and 18 years, had each from 13 to 20 carious teeth; 26 youths had at least 148 fillings, and only 12 out of 158 were *artificially sound*, and 146 required 692 teeth to be filled, 142 permanent and 28 temporary teeth extracted.

"This astounding revelation as to the neglected condition of the teeth of children of well-to-do parents proves the fallacy of trusting to their receiving professional attention during the vacations, unless some means are taken to call the attention of the parents to the matter."

THE INTEREST OF LIFE IN CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

BY THE REV. C. A. WHITTUCK,
Rector of Great Shefford.

I. THE EXTERNAL WORLD—*continued.*

Reconstructive Efforts.—We come now to treat of the child's own attempts to construct a moral unity out of the external world, such as it may set over against the mere individualism of the desires. We say the child's *own* attempts in order to show that the construction of this moral unity is native to the child's own mind and is not simply due to outside influences of education. These latter are of course helpful in childhood, nor could the child make any progress towards unity without something which may serve to it in this capacity, though this something need not be education in the commonly received sense. Yet this force of education, however important and indispensable in childhood, is during that season subordinate to the child's own instinctive efforts after unity of perception and the moral unity accompanying it.

Idealisation of Surroundings.—We must start then from the child's consciousness (which though for the most part latent is none the less present and active) of the totality of its own experience. This home of the spirit, if we may so speak, is conceived by the child, not merely in later years, but also to a certain extent whilst it is in process of creation, under a quasi-poetical form. The concrete and compact whole of a child's life—its associates, surroundings and recurrent sensations—is under normal circumstances a true source of delight to the mind, and of support to the imaginative activity, of children, and is embraced by them with a warmth of appreciation more genuine if less effusive than any pleasures induced by novel and strange experiences. This is so at all events in the case of a happy childhood, and indeed even where the circumstances of the home in which children are brought up are not happy, it is wonderful how much poetical interest often attaches to the circle of associations which are engendered by personal, domestic, and local

relationships and by the everyday presentation of the same familiar facts and usages.*

Envisagement of a Whole.—Now outward things acquire significance for the child by reason of their several positions in this general picture.

Particular objects do not as such appeal to the poetical sense of children, but they exercise this effect because they are seen in reference to life as a whole. But particular objects when thus represented as parts of a whole become singly and separately lovable, so much so indeed that it often appears as if they were loved for their own sakes alone.

Nor is it only that the child takes pleasure in this synthesis of its already accumulated experiences, but it is this synthesis which also gives to each *new* object of desire presented to the child its meaning and value.

In common life no doubt we necessarily conceive of the pleasures thus elicited as arising from certain specific properties inherent in the newly presented objects rather than from the relationship of these latter to the child's whole state of mind. Yet though the outward stimulus in each case is different and elicits a correspondingly different reaction, the resulting experience is only to a small extent due to this consideration, and may with more justice be ascribed to the child's consciousness of a new possession added to its general property. In point of fact it is this *background* of experience which alone enables the child to receive the new impression in an intelligent and intelligible sense.

It is the perpetual effort of children thus to adjust the novelties and varieties of their experience to what is old and familiar, to harmonise the lineaments successively added to their picture of life with its main outlines. The pleasures of children arise to a large extent from success, and their dissatisfaction from failure, in the pursuit of this object. Children are thus for ever engaged in launching forth into an ideal world. They are building themselves an habitation to dwell in, and though some of them may

* "The weakest 'seeming' or 'impression' which does duty for reason in a child or uneducated person is, on the whole, to find itself at peace in a system which evokes its full capacity."—Bosanquet's "*Companion to Plato's Republic*," p. 140. (Note on *Republic* 431. E.)

think more of the basis, whilst others are employed rather in adding to the superstructure, there must in all cases alike be a combination of the idea of the edifice as a whole with that of its parts.

Sense of a "Beyond."—But besides that the child thus constructs a world of its own within the domain of actual experience, it endeavours further to promote its sense of unity by the recognition of a world *beyond* experience. This conception of a "beyond" is due originally to the felt imperfection of the synthesis thus far arrived at. Yet it cannot realise itself except by means of that very external world the inadequacy of which is its justifying motive. In order then to interpret to itself the meaning of a world beyond sense, the child makes use of the world which it knows, the result being certain supersensuous existences invested with earthly attributes.

But of course these existences have long since received names, and the child's part therefore (except indeed at the time when mankind was itself in its childhood) consists only in utilising conceptions which it finds ready to hand. What the child does then is to take these names *e.g.* God and Heaven, and on the one hand to employ them for the purpose of explaining its own view of the external world, whilst on the other hand, these names are themselves explained by reference to the external world. Its God and its Heaven are but enlarged forms of sense, whilst at the same time they are assumed to be supersensuous.

Its Value.—Though, however, the child's mind thus revolves in a circle and borrows from experience that which it then represents to itself as transcending experience, there is much more than this merely barren result involved in the process which conducts to it. For the very fact that the child has conceived to itself a world beyond sense, however grossly this latter may be interpreted, is itself a support to the child, and a support which, as the child's knowledge widens and deepens, is not only increasingly felt but is also more intelligently realised. For though at starting the apprehension of the 'beyond' is scarcely more (it always is *somewhat* more) than a reduplication of the sense world, the child's imagination by degrees blends with the prospect which is thus opened up, and becomes alive to more spiritual impressions, or at

least may do so. We are here, however, only concerned with the child's development in this its first stage.

Baffled Reconstruction.—Nevertheless, the child often feels a painful sense of contrast between the realisation of its own life and the indifference of the surrounding world. The child sees, cannot help seeing, that the world does not altogether respond to the demands of childhood.

The feeling that this is so acts at once as a stimulus urging the child to the further realisation of its own life, and at the same time causes it to indulge in that luxury of melancholy the cult of which is so common a characteristic of children of a certain type, especially at the time when they are growing out of childhood. It is well known that at such a time the love of life and of the enjoyment of life is not at all incompatible with a state of dejection readily acquiesced in and sometimes even welcomed. That this is often a merely morbid and almost always a merely transitional phenomenon, is no doubt true. Yet in spite of its liability to affectation and extravagance, this state of mind is not without its justification in view of the aspect which the world presents to the child now fast turning into the youth or maiden. Afterwards this state of mind, if persisted in, becomes Byronism or Wertherism, or at a later period still, cynicism, or finally pessimism. But in early youth, there is neither revolt nor despair. Rather the limitations and impossibilities of experience are regarded from a point of view which is partly melancholy, but partly also pleasurable, the proportion between these two elements depending on the circumstances, and still more on the native character, of the persons thus affected.

A healthy combination of these two classes of symptoms combines them almost equally in such a way as that they form together a sort of stable equilibrium. It is thus that the youthful Edgar Quinet* bears witness to his disgust of life and the almost simultaneous recovery from it. "Quand je t'écrivis, j'étais dans un de ces moments d'abattement où l'espérance vous échappe, où la vie n'est plus qu'un fardeau. De là, ce ton de mélancolie et de tristesse que tu as trouvé dans ma première lettre. Ces passages de la vie sont très-douloureux; ils ne durent que peu de temps et les moments d'après sont* marqués par une joie immodérée, témoin ma seconde lettre."

* "Lettres à sa mère," vol. i., p. 135.

IMAGINATION.

BY MRS. M. WOLRYCHE-WHITMORE.

IMAGINATION is literally the image-making faculty; the power by which we see something "in our mind's eye" which is not actually before us. The lowest and most elementary form in which this faculty is exercised is in the mental reproduction of something which we have formerly seen, heard, or felt. The recalling of an old image, not the creation of a new one. In this form the power is hardly looked upon as imagination, indeed it is generally called conception, but strictly it is an exercise, although a simple and elementary one of the imaginative faculty.

In this first form of imagination, memory takes a very important part; indeed the same may be said of all forms of imagination, even the highest, as we shall see when we come to consider them. Of the more generally recognized forms of imagination, there are two very clearly defined, namely, constructive and creative imagination; the first being by far the commoner of the two. Any work of imagination, which does not need the power of origination, is a manifestation of constructive imagination; the power of collecting and re-arranging with skill, materials all ready to hand, of reproducing and presenting in a new and pleasing form ideas which are already within our grasp.

The mind which can go beyond this, and has the power of creative imagination, is endowed with the Divine gift of genius, by which is discerned "some higher form of beauty than experience has ever presented, or some more profound truth than reason could bring within our grasp."

When we begin to consider the working of the faculty of constructive imagination we find that it demands a mind with many different qualities, and one carefully trained. In the first place, to "construct" at all materials are needed. An uncultivated, poorly-furnished mind is without the